



State of Connecticut

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Testimony of Senator Robert J. Kane
SB 1062 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROCESS OF ACCEPTANCE OF
CLAIMS FOR THE VETERANS' PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION.
March 3, 2009

Senator Maynard, Representative Graziani, Senator Fasano, Representative Harkins and members of the Veterans Affairs Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to have this bill heard in a public forum. I think that this will eliminate a far too common problem that we as legislators were most likely not aware of until now.

The issue that this proposal addresses came to my attention over the summer by a constituent who had served our country honorably during the Korean War. He had recently moved to Connecticut and was made aware of the tax abatement for veterans. However, he did not have his discharge papers namely his DD214. Without this paperwork the assessor was unable to grant him the special tax statutes to which he was entitled. Although the solution to this problem seems easy on the surface, contact the St. Louis National Personnel Records Building for a duplicate DD214, herein lays the biggest problem. In 1973 there was a major fire at the office and millions of records were lost and never recovered. Many men and women found themselves in the same predicament as my constituent; they no longer had proof of service to our country with honor and distinction thus denying them one of the small rewards they are eligible to receive as elderly veterans.

The current statute Sec. 12-93 does make an alternative to the DD214 available in order to obtain the abatement. The veteran has to each year present the assessor with a sworn affidavit of two disinterested parties of his service. I believe this is unreasonable. As our veterans get on in years finding two disinterested parties can be difficult. SB 1062 eliminates the need for navigating these barriers by allowing municipalities to accept claims for the veterans' property tax exemption where the paperwork of the eligible

veteran was destroyed in a fire or other natural disaster so long as the veteran is at least 70 years of age.

I believe this is fair. Veterans fought hard to defend our freedom and the good name of our country. This is but one small thing we can do to assist them in their older years in thanks for their service.

Thank you for your indulgence. I am happy to answer any questions.